



Flathead National Forest

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News Release

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Decision Notice Released for Cold Jim Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Project

BIGFORK, MT –SEPTEMBER 19, 2016 – The Swan Lake Ranger District, Flathead National Forest, has released the Decision Notice and finding of no significant impact for the Cold Jim Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Project. The Cold Jim Project is located approximately 3 miles northwest of the community of Condon, MT. The project area is in the Cold and Jim Creek watersheds within the Flathead National Forest in Lake and Missoula Counties.

The Decision Notice identifies Alternative C as the selected alternative. Under the selected alternative, approximately 740 acres of commercial harvest, 366 acres of pre-commercial thinning, 49 acres of inter-planting, and 3 resource enhancement projects would take place. Vegetation management activities will be accessed through an estimated 3.1 miles of temporary road. The selected alternative also includes 1.9 miles of road decommissioning and approximately 6 miles of Best Management Practices associated with the timber sale haul routes. Resource enhancement includes restoration of about 50 acres of drained wetlands.

According to Rich Kehr, Swan Lake District Ranger, "This decision balances public interest and ecological desired conditions, which include but are not limited to, reducing the risk of high-severity wildfire within the wildland urban interface, improving or maintaining the health, resiliency, and sustainability of forested stands, and providing forest products for local communities."

"In addition, the Cold Jim Project was designed to re-establish and retain ecological resilience of National Forest System lands and associated resources to achieve sustainable management and provide a broad range of ecosystem services, such as improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and increasing big game populations. Healthy, resilient landscapes have a greater capacity to absorb natural disturbances and large-scale threats to sustainability, especially under changing and uncertain future environmental conditions."

This Decision Notice, along with an *Updated* Environmental Assessment, can be found on the project website at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=38024>.

For more information, please contact the Swan Lake Ranger District at (406) 837-7500.

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